

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

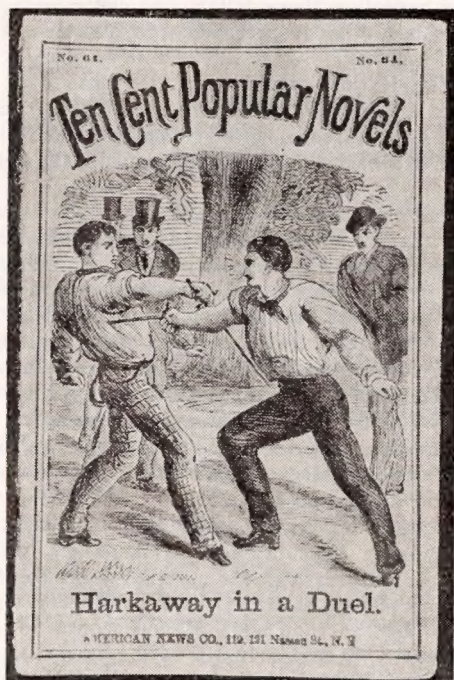
Vol. 41 No. 1

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Whole No. 472

In Defense of Listing Current Alger Values

By Ralph D. Gardner



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 145

TEN CENT POPULAR NOVELS

Publisher: Ornum & Co., Beekman St., New York, N. Y. Issues: 84 (highest seen advertised). Dates: 1870-1875. Schedule of Issue: Irregular. Size: 6½x4¼ inches. Price: 10c. Pages: 100. Illustrations: Hand-stenciled colored cover. No other illustrations. Contents: Border stories with many reprints of British highwayman stories. Also included were the Dick Lightheart and Jack Harkaway stories.

In Defense of Listing Current Alger Values

By Ralph D. Gardner

With my earlier book and now my updated new edition, "Road to Success; The Bibliography of the Works of Horatio Alger," I seem to have stirred up some controversy by letting my readers know the current values of Alger's books. Two recent Dime Novel Roundup authors have either stated or implied that to list cash values in a bibliography is either unnecessary or undesirable.

Since I have tremendous respect for the opinions of these contributors (although in this case I don't agree with them), and since I consider the Dime Novel Roundup family of readers to be a panel of experts who prefer to examine both views, I appreciate this opportunity to make what were my own decisions on this subject perfectly clear.

Prior to listing the values of Alger first editions, reprints, peripheral writings, autographs, etc., I discussed my idea with my publisher, Ken Butler, of Wayside Press. I wanted his opinion, not because I had a single reservation about the wisdom of revealing these dollars and cents facts, but rather because—to my knowledge—there was no precedent; no bibliograph had thus far supplied this added information.

I explained to Mr. Butler—who is also a veteran book collector—that, as many of my readers might know little about the Alger market. I wished to present a book to benefit all echelons of collectors, booksellers, librarians, etc. He agreed with my proposal that I should provide all available data on the subject.

At the outset, there are points that may require this clarification:

I neither set prices for which Horatio Alger's books are bought and sold, nor did I create them from arbitrary estimates. In almost every instance I recorded figures for which items were catalogued or for which they had been individually quoted to myself or other collectors by dealers, or the bids for which they were sold at auction. When more than single current prices were available, highs and lows were included. Rare exceptions to this procedure were the very few editions that have never, so far as I could ascertain, been catalogued, offered by dealers or sold at auction, in which case I stated thus, adding either that there is no price-measuring device for the given volume or indicating what was plainly noted as my own estimate of what it might bring in the event it should appear on the market.

Those who read my bibliography know that I caution:

"It is most necessary to point out, at the start, that these are prices asked by dealers and/or others who are familiar with the Alger trade. These definitely are NOT prices paid at thrift shops or country auctions . . . Nor are these the prices paid by the thousands of bookscouts or 'pickers'—the Alger collector's best friends— . . . regularly attend the barn sales in their vicinity . . .

"These, rather, are the prices that knowledgeable, reputable booksellers have asked for their merchandise . . . At best, the prices indicated can only serve as a guide. Just as it was pointed out that a valuable first edition can

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sometimes be bought for a small fraction of its retail sales value—and, indeed, almost every Alger collector enjoys retelling how he bought a rare-as-hens-teeth first edition for a dime—so is it likely that he would occasionally pay far more for a book than its value (and better judgement) dictates.”

My readers also know I expressed my opinion that the prices certain books sold for were in excess of what thirty-five years of collecting suggests they should more properly be. For instance, under my listing of “Do and Dare,” while recording that “On May 18, 1971, a first edition of “Do and Dare,” inscribed: “William D. Conover—from his friend Horatio Alger Jr.” was auctioned at Parke-Bernet Galleries for \$120.00, a record for this item,” I state: “Value of first edition is \$22.50” (I readily acknowledge that an author’s inscription adds to a book’s worth, and I carefully cover just how much more it is worth in my section on Alger’s autograph material).

Under my listing of “Nothing to Do,” I state: “Although offered for as much as \$145.00 . . . proper range would be \$80.00-\$85.00.” Collectors who have recently been lucky enough to latch on to this toughie can confirm this.

Critics have with only partial accuracy quoted as the “Gardner price” a top figure I listed, without explaining that a more realistic lower tag was also supplied for the given item. They might have provided my complete statement so those who have not read my books will be fully and more correctly advised. And they should recall that, while recording loftier amounts brought by “glamour issues,” I also name—in three separate categories—all editions which fetch more modest sums (with the group of most commonly-found Algers listed as “Valued at 3.00 or less”).

It is logical to book-buyer and bookseller alike that prices are set by only one standard: supply and demand. The dealer naturally needs fair profits for his wares but—whatever he asks—he can get only what customers are willing to pay!

In a way, it seems that prices of books we want are always too high. I recall my visit to the ancient book store that was once located between 11th and 12th Streets on the west side of Sixth Avenue, in New York, presided over by an elderly lady (at least she seemed elderly to me during the 1930’s). Entering her shop and asking if she had any Algers, she showed me a sparkling row of them priced at one dollar apiece. Up to that time I’d never paid more than a quarter for an Alger so, without even examining them, I left. How many times since both that little lady and her shop disappeared sometime during World War I have I regretted not grabbing every book on the shelf! But, while regretting, I’m perhaps unconsciously thinking of her Algers as so low-priced by current, not contemporary, standards.

Similarly, I recall—one day in the mid-1940’s—being offered a splendid specimen, the first Alger first edition I’d ever seen, in the Rare Books Department at Scribner’s (then directed by the eminent David Randall). The price, \$15.00, being too steep for me, I passed it up. Second thoughts gnawed for weeks, after which, deciding I must be mad to consider spending so much for a title I already possessed in a later—though respectable—edition, I made up my mind to buy the book. By the time I returned it was sold. And all the years since I’ve wished I could get that volume at that price!

Prices of Algers—as with so many other categories of desirable paper Americana—are unquestionably higher today than they were when many of us embarked upon our hobbies. Collectors of other authors or subjects, stamp collectors, autograph collectors—to say nothing of housewives—will agree that most things now cost more than they once did. Most of us yearn to pursue our hobbies at yesteryear’s prices. But such a wish is just unrealistic.

While writing these lines, I refer to many, many letters received from

readers—collectors, booksellers and librarians—over the years since my first Alger bibliography was issued in 1964. There were a few—really very few—from those (generally collectors) who disagreed with my decision to report book values. These disagreed with the principle; none with the accuracy of the values. I got the distinct impression that at least some of my critics wished to guard an Alger knowledge and acumen possessed by relatively few. Granted, it was a sophistication that probably took them years of trial and error to acquire. Now this knowledge was available to everyone. I must confess my continuing belief that to make every facet of my own collecting experience available to all who seek it was proper and, in the long run, beneficial to all who buy or sell Algers.

On the other hand, there were dozens of letters from:

Persons who "had Algers packed away in the attic," who had no personal collecting interest in them (sadly, a number commented that, thinking they were worthless, they had already discarded some) but now realizing that they could turn these books into cash, had brought them down and were offering them for sale.

Booksellers who previously considered stocking (let alone mailing offers or cataloguing) Algers to be unprofitable, were not actively acquiring them whenever possible and—as promised by me—they found eager buyers.

Collectors unable to find nostalgically remembered Algers and meeting only with discouragement and disappointment when seeking them, now found it easier to locate and purchase these treasures of their youth.

Country bookscouts who, formerly passing up Algers dumped into rummage sale bins or knocked down for a quarter a lot at rural auctions because they weren't aware of any demand for them, now grab all the can get and solicit Alger want lists.

Today's soaring Alger market—that is, today's Alger prices—was not created by any individual. Rather, it simply reflects two obvious factors: the ever-growing rarity of Alger's works and the probability that, until relatively recently, his writings were vastly undervalued.

[Editor's note: Ralph D. Gardner's earlier book, "Horatio Alger; or, The American Hero Era," is out of print. His new book, "Road to Success; The Bibliography of the Works of Horatio Alger" (160 pp., paperback, published by Wayside Press, Mendota, Illinois, \$9.50) was released November 1st, 1971.]

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 358. George Geiss, 3722 N. Marshall St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19140 (New mem.)

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| A Patriot Lad of Old Long Island, The Penn Publishing Co., vg | ---- | 2.59 |
| A Patriot Lad of Old New Hampshire, The Penn Publishing Co., vg | - | 2.50 |
| A Patriot Lad of Old Philadelphia, The Penn Publishing Co. vg | ---- | 2.50 |
| A Patriot Lad of Old Salem, The Penn Publishing Co., vg | ----- | 2.50 |
| A Patriot Lad of Old Saratoga, The Penn Publishing Co., vg | ----- | 2.50 |
| A Patriot Lad of Old Trent, The Penn Publishing Co., vg | ----- | 2.50 |

The Garfield Library

By Denis R. Rogers

PART III

(Conclusion)

Author Index.

ADAMS, William Taylor (1822-1897).

Published originally under the pen name:

BROOKS McCORMICK: Nos. 30 and 40

Published originally under the pen name:

OLIVER OPTIC: Nos. 43, 46, 49, 56, 58, 68 and 79.

Published originally under the pen name:

GAYLE WINTERTON: No. 60.

ALGER, Horatio Jr. (1834-1899).

Published originally under the author's real name: Nos. 1 to 20, 22, 24, 26; 28, 35, 39, 42, 52, 55, 57, 75, 76, 78, 81, 83, 85 and the re-issues Nos. 1 to 8.

Published originally under the pen name:

ARTHUR LEE PUTNAM: No. 69.

ASHMORE, Annie—see STUART, Miss Margaret B.

BARNUM, Phineas Taylor—see ELLIS, Edward Sylvester.

BARRETT, John Erigena—see Note 14.

CASTLEMEN, Harry—see FOSDICK, Charles Austin.

COBB, Sylvanus Jr. (1821-1887): No. 88.

COLLINGWOOD, Harry—see LANCASTER, William Joseph Cosens.

CONVERSE, Frank H. (?-1889): Nos. 29, 44, 47, 59 and 64.

COOMER, George H. (1825-?): Nos. 27 and 37.

COOMES, Oliver (Oll) (1845-1921): No. 91.

DOYLE, Daniel (A Mine Boss): No. 74—see Note 14.

ELLIS, Edward Sylvester (1840-1916).

Published originally under the author's real name: Nos. 38, 67 and 77.

Probably ghost written for PHINEAS TAYLOR BARNUM: No. 36.

Published originally under the pen name:

Capt. R. M. HAWTHORNE: No. 54.

FOSDICK, Charles Austin (1842-1915).

Published originally under the pen name:

HARRY CASTLEMEN: No. 87.

GRAYDON, William Murray (1864-1936): No. 89.

HAWTHORNE, Capt. R. M.—see ELLIS, Edward Sylvester.

KALER, James Otis (1848-1912).

Published originally under the pen name:

JAMES OTIS: Nos. 53, 63, 66, 80 and 84.

KER, David (1842-1914): No. 45.

LANCASTER, William Joseph Cosens (1843 or 1851-1922).

Published originally under the pen name:

HARRY COLLINGWOOD: Nos. 41 and 61.

McCORMICK, Brooks—see ADAMS, William Taylor.

MILLER, I. P.: No. 82

(I have not been able to establish whether this by-line was the real name of the author or merely a pseudonym).

MUNROE, Kirk (1850-1930): Nos. 25 and 86.

OLD CONTRIBUTOR, An—see PECK, William Henry.

OPTIC, Oliver—see ADAMS, William Taylor.

OTIS, James—see KALER, James Otis.

PECK, William Henry (1830-1892): No. 92.

PRENTICE, Harry: No. 74—see Note 14.

PUTNAM, Arthur Lee—see ALGER, Horatio Jr.

SIMPSON, Mrs. J. M.—see Note 20.

STODDARD, William Osborn (1835-1925): Nos. 33, 71 and 73.

STUART, Miss Margaret B.—see Note 20.

Published originally under the pen name:

ANNIE ASHMORE: Nos. 32, 48, and 62.

WHITE, Matthew Jr. (1857-1940): No. 65.

WHITTAKER, Captain Frederick (1838-1889): Nos. 70 and 72.

WINTERTON, Gayle—see ADAMS, William Taylor.

Authorship not yet identified.

Published originally without the name of the author being stated: No. 90.

Published originally as by the author of "The Black Privateer," "Only a Painted Face," "Faust," etc., etc.: No. 31.

The source of the Garfield Library tale has not yet been found: Nos. 21, 23, 24 and 50.

NOTES

1. The Garfield Library No. 5 should not be confused with another tale by Horatio Alger Jr., "Strong and Steady; or, Paddle Your Own Canoe," which was reprinted as The Garfield Library No. 18.
2. It has been suggested that a Norwegian edition of this work, "Skopusseren Tom" (N. W. Damm & Sønns forlag, Kristiania : 1921) was a translation of The Garfield Library No. 17. While it is true that N. W. Damm & Sønns almost always chose English rather than American editions for translation purposes and that The Garfield Library No. 17 is the only known English edition of "Tattered Tom," the 1921 publication date of the Norwegian reprint—incidentally there were cloth bound and paperback editions—inclines me to favor an American edition as the translator's source text, although I must leave it to the Alger specialists to make their own choice of the particular American edition most likely to have been so honored.

During the final quarter of the nineteenth century the imports of the U.S.A. far exceeded its exports to the United Kingdom. That imbalance led to cargo ships having to re-cross the Atlantic from west to east in ballast, after discharging their cargoes at the eastern seaboard ports in the U.S.A. In some instances books were loaded into the empty holds.

On arrival in the U.K. these ballast books, as they became known, were sold on the English market. They are recorded in The English Catalogue by title and city of publication, but not by publisher's name. The other information given is the English selling price and the year (plus in some instances the month) of first offer for sale in the U.K.

No ballast book has been identified as such by the writer, but that is not surprising if, on arrival, the only action taken prior to putting the books on sale, was to stamp the English price on the dust wrapper. Unless the dust wrapper on a ballast book had been preserved it would be indistinguishable from any other copy of the same American edition.

Alphabetical list of American editions of works by Horatio Alger Jr., which are recorded in The English Catalogues as having been offered for

sale in the United Kingdom.

Adrift in the City : Philadelphia : December 1895 : 5s/6d.

A Backwoods Boy; or, How a Railsplitter became President : Philadelphia : 1883 : 6s/0d.

Ben's Nugget; or, A Boy's Search for Fortune : Philadelphia : 1883 : 6s/0d

Bob Burton; or, The Young Ranchman of the Missouri : Phil. : 1889 : 6s/0d

Digging for Gold : Philadelphia : 1892 : 6s/0d.

Do and Dare; or, A Brave Boy's Fight for Fortune : Phila. : 1884 : 6s/0d.

Facing the World : Philadelphia : April 1893 : 6s/0d.

Five Hundred Dollar Check. A Story for Boys : New York : April 1892 : 6s/0d.

Frank Hunter's Peril. A Story : Philadelphia : December 1896 : 5s/6d.

From Canal Boy to President; or, The Boyhood and Manhood of Garfield : New York : 1881 : 6s/6d.

From Farm Boy to Senator. The Boyhood Life of D. Webster : New York : 1882 : 6s/6d.

Grandfather Baldwin's Thanksgiving and Other Ballads : Boston : 1876 : 6s/0d.

Hector's Inheritance; or, The Boys of Smith's Institute : Philadelphia : 1885 : 6s/0d.

Helping Himself; or, Grace Thornton's Ambition : Philadelphia : 1886 : 6s/0d.

In a New World; or, Among the Goldfields of Australia : Philadelphia : December 1893 : 5s/6d.

Luke Walton; or, The Chicago Newsboy : Philadelphia : 1889 : 6s/0d.

Rupert's Ambition. A Story for Boys : Philadelphia : Nov. 1899 : 6s/0d.

A Store Boy; or, The Fortunes of Ben Barclay : Phila. : 1887 : 6s/0d.

Struggling Upward; or, Luke Larkin's Luck : Phila. : Dec. 1890 : 6s/0d.

Victor Vane, the Young Secretary : Philadelphia : December 1894 : 5s/6d.

The Young Boatman of Pine Point : Philadelphia : October 1892 : 6s/0d.

The Young Circus Rider; or, The Mystery of Robert Rudd : Philadelphia : 1883 : 6s/0d.

The Young Salesman. A Story : Philadelphia : 1896 : 6s/0d.

It has been claimed that John F. Shaw & Company of London reprinted "Ben's Nugget" and "Digging for Gold" but, in the absence of any record in The English Catalogues and of any surviving copies, it must be doubted whether Shaw ever did reprint those two titles. It seems feasible that the claim had its origins in a sight of ballast book copies of the two works and of Shaw editions of "The Nugget Finders" and, perhaps, "Obed's Nugget" (see Note 24), which led after a lapse of time to a confused memory.

Number of ballast book titles recorded in The

Name of the Author	English Catalogues
William T. Adams/Oliver Optic -----	26
P. T. Barnum -----	1
Sylvanus Cobb Jr. -----	3
Frank H. Converse -----	1
Edward S. Ellis -----	11
Charles A. Fosdick/Harry Castlemon -----	1
William Murray Graydon -----	1
James Otis Kaler/James Otis -----	17
David Ker -----	2
William O. Stoddard -----	37

3. The Garfield Library No. 25 also contains an anonymous ten page short

story, entitled "Good for Evil. A Russian Story."

4. There are grounds for thinking that the tale reprinted as *The Garfield Library No. 36* may have been written or ghosted for the Great Showman by Edward S. Ellis (see *The Dime Novel Round Up* : Vol. 26 No. 12 : Whole No. 315 : pp. 148/150 : 15 December 1958).
5. On the wrapper of *The Garfield Library No. 44* the sub-title is shown as "The Search for the Hindoo Cross" and on the running head as "The Mystery of a Diamond Cross."
6. *The Garfield Library No. 54* may have been the only book edition of this story of the opening up of Oklahoma to settlers. A cloth bound edition in *The American Publishers Corporation's St. Nicholas Series for Boys and Girls* was included in the *Classified List of Fall Publications—Juvenile Literature* (*The Publishers Weekly* Nos. 1286/1287 : 19/26 September 1896) and again in *The Publishers Weekly Christmas Bookshelf* issue (No. 1296 : 28 November 1896 : Page 94 : *Books for Young People*). Significantly, however, no copy of the cloth bound edition has been found and it is not recorded in *The American Publishers Corporation's catalogues* in the 1896 and 1897 *Publishers Trade List Annuals*. Considerable doubt must exist, therefore, as to whether the work was in fact ever published in the short lived New York firm's *St. Nicholas Series for Boys and Girls*.
7. On the wrapper of *The Garfield Library No. 61* the title is given as "Ned Wilson, the Hero of Refuge Island."
8. The running head in *The Garfield Library No. 28* is "The Young Montebank."
9. The two serials were reprinted in many different book editions, but *The Garfield Library No. 67* is the only edition amalgamating the two yarns, which are companion tales and not a story and its sequel.
10. The serial, "Facing the World; or, Gilbert Greyson's Fortune" (*Young Israel* Vol. 6 Nos. 1 to 12), which was reprinted as *The Garfield Library No. 16*, should not be confused with "Facing the World; or, The Haps and Mishaps of Harry Vane" (*Golden Argosy* Vol. III Nos. 125 to 139), which was reprinted as part of *The Garfield Library No. 35*.
11. No surviving copy of the issue of "Young Israel" containing the final instalment of "The Young Adventurers. A Story of the Pacific Coast" has been located, but it is a reasonable presumption, having regard to the other Alger tales serialized in that periodical, that the story ran throughout Volume 8 and so was completed in No. 12 of that volume.
12. In the December 1876 issue of "Young Israel" (Vol. 6 No. 12), after the conclusion of "Facing the World; or, Gilbert Greyson's Fortune," this announcement appears. "The next volume of this series will be "Wait and Hope; or, Ben Bradford's Career" : The change from "Career" to "Mot-to" upon publication may have flowed from the decision to serialize the story in two parts.
13. The serial, "Wait and Win; or, Ben Bradford's Success" (*Young Israel* Vol. VII Nos. 7 to 12), which was reprinted as part of *The Garfield Library No. 20*, should not be confused with the cloth bound book, "Wait and Win. The Story of Jack Drummond's Pluck" by Horatio Alger Jr. (*The A. L. Burt Company, New York* : 1908), which was a reprint of "Work and Win; or, Jack Drummond's Pluck" by Horatio Alger Jr., a serial which ran in "The Golden Argosy" from 5 April through 12 July 1884 (Vol. II Nos. 70 to 84). It is tempting to think that Burt changed the "Golden

Argosy" serial title because of the presence in their list of "Work and Win. The Story of a Country Boy's Success" by Edward S. Ellis. Unfortunately such a theory will not hold water. The Ellis tale, a reprint of "Perseverance Parker; or, Slow and Sure" ("Golden Days": James Elverston, Philadelphia, Pa. : Vol. II Nos. 32 to 44 : 16 July through 8 December 1881) was not issued by The A. L. Burt Company until 1910. The probability, therefore, is that the change of Alger title from "Work and Win" to "Wait and Win" was accidental.

14. It has been suggested to me that Daniel Doyle (A Mine Boss) concealed the identity of a writer familiar with the coal mining regions of Pennsylvania and that the camouflage was essential because the by-line, when first used, was applied to the serial, "Molly Maguire, The Terror of the Coal Fields," which ran in "The New York Weekly" from 13 March through 3 July 1876 (Vol. XXXI Nos. 17 to 33).

For those unfamiliar with the subject perhaps I should explain that The Molly Maguires was the name of a secret organization which, during the decade following the end of the Civil War, terrorized the Schuylkill and Shamokin districts of Pennsylvania. Their atrocities included the shooting of men in the presence of their wives and children, and no one dared to molest them. If a Molly was arrested his comrades eagerly provided an alibi by committing perjury. They nominated officers and controlled elections. Members of the order became constables, county commissioners, policemen, chiefs of police, and one of them came within a few votes of being elected a judge in Schuylkill County. The miscreants were eventually brought to book and the organization smashed through the gallantry of a Pinkerton detective, who infiltrated their councils.

Street & Smith made much of the fact that the serial was an exposé by an experienced, practical miner, who had worked his way up to the post of mine boss and whose life would be endangered if his identity became known to the coal field anarchists.

When launching the follow-up serial, which the topical success of "Molly Maguire" had rendered likely to boost the circulation of "The New York Weekly," Street & Smith stressed its reforming aspect. Certainly "The Slate-Picker" relates the sufferings of child labor in the anthracite mines of Pennsylvania with an unrelievedly sombre narrative.

When the second serial by Daniel Doyle (A Mine Boss) was reprinted as No. 6 of A. L. Burt's paperback "Boys' Home Library" the author was shown as Harry Prentice, who was later credited with three other books published by Burt, namely "Captured by Zulus," "The Boy Explorer," and "Captured by Apes."

Mr. Pachon tells me that he spent a lot of time trying to establish the identity of Harry Prentice without success and he rightly points out that "The Slate-Picker" and the other three tales by Harry Prentice appear to be so different as to cast doubt on their being from the same pen.

Mr. Pachon (in *litteris* November 1970 to 1971), who lived in the coal region of Pennsylvania as a boy, considers that "Molly Maguire, The Terror of the Coal Fields" and "The Slate-Picker" could only have been written by someone familiar with life in that area. He goes on to suggest that the most logical candidate for authorship of the Daniel Doyle stories is John Erigena Barrett, an Irishman, born in 1849, who was brought to America by his parents and who spent most of his life in the Pennsylvania coal fields. Barrett is said to have been a reporter in the area at one time and to have progressed to be editor and eventually publisher of a newspaper.

There is little on record about Barrett's writings, but he did contribute two serials to "Saturday Night" (James Elverson, Philadelphia, Pa.), namely:

Worse than Death; or, The Mystery of a Madhouse (Vol. XXI Nos. 12 to 23 : 24 November 1883 to 9 February 1884).

The Black List. A Story of To-day (Vol. XXI Nos. 33 to 44 : 19 April to 5 July 1884).

"Worse than Death" was announced in No. 11 as a thrilling story of the evils and monstrous wrongs perpetrated in insane asylums written . . . by an author who has made a long study of the subject. The blurb goes on to say that the story shows clearly that those who manage such institutions should . . . be jailed and that so-called investigating committees of State-supported asylums need investigating more than the institutions themselves.

"The Black List" was announced in No. 32 as a workingman's story . . . a story for the workshop and the home . . . a painstaking, earnest effort to uphold the manly attributes of labor. "The Black List" is a story of labor troubles in the Pennsylvania steel industry.

On this evidence it is easy to accept Barrett as a strong candidate for authorship of "The Slate-Picker." Although I have not been able to study the other three Harry Prentice tales the following Burt publicity blurbs make it difficult to accept them as having been written by the author of "The Slate-Picker":

Captured by Zulus. A Story of Trapping in Africa.

The adventures of two lads, Dick Elsworth and Bob Harvey, in the wilds of South Africa. By strategem the Zulus capture Dick and Bob and take them to the principal kraal or village. The lads escape death by digging their way out of the prison hut by night. They are pursued, but the Zulus finally give up pursuit. Mr. Prentice tells exactly how wild beast collectors secure specimens on their native stamping grounds. The story was first published by A. L. Burt as No. 24 of the paperback "Boys' Home Library" in 1890.

The Boy Explorers. The Adventures of Two Boys in Alaska.

Two boys, Raymond and Spencer Manning, travel to Alaska to join their father in search of their uncle. On their arrival at Sitka the boys, with an Indian guide, set off across the mountains. The trip is fraught with perils that test the lads' courage to the utmost. All through their exciting adventures the lads demonstrate what can be accomplished by pluck and resolution.

Captured by Apes. The Wonderful Adventures of a Young Animal Trainer.

Philip Garland, a young animal collector and trainer, sets sail for Eastern seas in quest of a new stock of living curiosities. The vessel is wrecked off the coast of Borneo, and young Garland is cast ashore on a small island, and captured by apes that overrun the place. Very novel indeed is the way by which the young man escapes death. This story was first published by A. L. Burt as No. 118 of the paperback "Boys' Home Library" on 1 February 1889, under the title, "The King of Apeland."

Moreover the one book by Barrett in "The Library of Congress" ("The Fugitives and Other Poems" : The Peter Paul Company, Buffalo, N. Y. : 1897) hardly suggests a writer of boys' adventure stories.

Having gone into the tantalizing authorship background to "Ben Burton, the Slate-Picker" all that remains is to try to formulate a theory offering a reasonable solution of the Daniel Doyle/Harry Prentice mystery.

It seems virtually free from doubt that Daniel Doyle (A Mine Boss) was a pen name and, in the absence of any evidence, I think there is no need to speculate as to whether the true name of the author was John E. Barreett.

As to Harry Prentice, Mr. Pachon thinks it significant that the name has never been found used with any imprint other than that of A. L. Burt and that "Captured by Zulus," "The Boy Explorers" and "The King of Apeland"/"Captured by Apes" also have not been found with any other imprint or by-line.

Taking into account that A. L. Burt had something of a struggle to establish a popular juvenile list and, in that connection, made a deal with Street & Smith to reprint serials from that firm's story papers in the newly started paperback "Boys' Home Library," Mr. Pachon has put forward an interesting speculation.

For some unknown reason A. L. Burt wanted to reprint "The Slate-Picker," even though such a stark story was wildly inappropriate for a juvenile series. This raised a question as to the by-line to be used. Obviously, in view of the connection of Daniel Doyle (a Mine Boss) with "The Molly Maguires," it may have been considered inadvisable to use the author's true name, despite the fact that the secret society's power had long since been smashed. Consequently a new pen name, Harry Prentice, was devised by A. L. Burt.

Then, having created a pen name and still being short of tales by established juvenile authors, such as Alger, Ellis and Otis, A. L. Burt decided to use it again for three adventure yarns expressly written by a staff writer.

The main weakness of such a theory is that, so far as is known, A. L. Burt was not a user of stock pen names. A secondary weakness is that there seems to have been no convincing reason for inventing a new pen name for "The Slate-Picker" when, by dropping the words, (A Mine Boss), A. L. Burt would have had in Daniel Doyle just as euphonious a combination as Harry Prentice.

An alternative viable theory is that the two Daniel Doyle serials were written by an experienced journalist from graphic descriptions of life in the Pennsylvania coal mines, as told to him by a real life miner who, not surprisingly, lacked the education to write stories himself. Thus, in fact, Daniel Doyle (A. Mine Boss) concealed the identities of the miner and his ghost writer.

Then, when A. L. Burt came to reprint "The Slate-Picker," the ghost writer decided to apply a new pseudonym because there was just an outside chance that the use of his own name might lead to the identification of the miner by someone with a long memory recalling the two "New York Weekly" serials and remembering the ghost writer's close association with the miner at that time.

Next, Daniel Doyle was also rejected because the ghost writer had written three adventure yarns for A. L. Burt, in the composition of which, needless to say, the miner had had no hand.

This alternative theory, while providing grounds for believing that one author could have been responsible for all five tales (two as ghost writer and three as full author), appears to militate against John E. Barreett as being the author in question, having regard to his two serials for "Saturday Night." It is only fair to add, however, that the only one of the five Doyle/Prentice stories which I have been able to read is "Ben Burton, the Slate-Picker" and that I have not studied the two serials by John E. Bar-

rett, which appeared in "Saturday Night."

Anyway, in the context of a note on The Garfield Library No. 74, I have devoted quite enough space to an authorship problem, on which it has to be admitted there is insufficient circumstantial evidence to support any one theory.

15. The sub-title of The Garfield Library No. 27: or, Adventures among the Mountains : appears on the front of the wrapper only.
16. The title on the front of the wrapper of The Garfield Library No. 51 reads: Jack Esbon's Eventful Voyage in Southern Seas.
17. The sub-title of The Garfield Library No. 53: or, Unprovoked Mutiny : appears on the front of the wrapper and above Chapter I, but not on the title page.
18. The sub-title of The Garfield Library No. 66: or, Adventures on Inland Waterways : appears above Chapter I only.
19. In the first instalment of "The Garfield Boys' Journal" serialization of The Garfield Library No. 90 the title was: The Young Squire of Arleigh. In the second instalment this was changed to: The Young Squire. A Story of English Public School Life. That title was reduced to: The Young Squire : in the third instalment. The title: The Young Squire of Heronsfoot : appeared for the first time in the fourth instalment and was then retained for the remaining ten instalments. The only clue found to the identity of the author was another serial: "Dark Blue" by the author of "The Young Squire of Heronsfoot" : which was serialized in the same story paper from 6 March through 22 May 1895 (Vol. II Nos. 24 to 35). That clue does no more than confirm my belief that the author was British, because the tale is about life at Oxford University. For the benefit of American readers I had better say that dark and light blue are the distinguishing colors of Britain's premier universities, Oxford and Cambridge.
20. Annie Ashmore has been credited as a pen name of Margaret B. Stuart (A Bibliographical Listing of "Golden Argosy"/"Argosy" and "Boys' World" compiled by Stanley A. Pachon : Edward T. LeBlanc, Fall River, Mass. : Bibliographical Listing No. 3 : March 1962) and of Mrs. J. M. Simpson (A Catalog of Books represented by Library of Congress Printed Cards issued to July 31, 1942 : Vol. 6 : Page 546 : Edwards Brothers Incorporated, Ann Arbor, Michigan : 1942).

One might be forgiven for jumping to the conclusion that Margaret B. Stuart became Mrs. Simpson upon marriage but, although closely connected, Miss Stuart and Mrs. Simpson were not one and the same person.

Mr. Pachon has not completed investigations, which he has in hand, about these two ladies and so it would be unfair to reveal more now, except to say that, while the ascription by The Library of Congress to Mrs. Simpson is superficially logical, Mr. Pachon's careful research satisfies me that Miss Margaret B. Stuart was the author of the three "Argosy" serials by Annie Ashmore, which were reprinted anonymously in The Garfield Library.

21. Mr. Pachon (in *litteris* : 11 December 1970) suspects, because of the reference at the end of the A. K. Loring first book edition of "The Young Adventurer," that the first edition of "The Young Miner" may have been a serial in "Young Israel" bearing the title: "The Young Pioneer; or, Tom Nelson in California." If that conjecture is true to the mark, I would expect to find the serial in "Young Israel" running from January through December 1879 (Vol. IX Nos. 1 to 12). In the absence of known

surviving copies of the story paper covering that period the matter rests as a supposition worthy of mention with a view to further investigation.

22. Mr. Pachon (in litteris : 11 December 1970) has suggested that there may have been serial origins of "The Young Explorer" and "Ben's Nugget" in the unlocated issues of "Young Israel." He believes that there is one complete run of "Young Israel" in a Hebrew University Library in the Mid-West but, in the absence of any more information, it has not been possible to check out what must be regarded as an idea sufficiently promising to merit vigorous follow up by some Alger enthusiast not too remote from the area of potential research.
23. When the serialization of "In a New World" was announced in Vol. III No. 124 (18 April 1885) of "The Golden Argosy," the sub-title was given as, "Harry Vane in Australia." The change to "Among the Goldfields of Australia" was not explained by Munsey, but it seems reasonable to believe that, in all probability, the more evocative sub-title was decided upon as the result of a last minute inspiration.
24. "In a New World; or, Among the Goldfields of Australia" was reprinted in the United Kingdom by John F. Shaw & Company of London under the title, "The Nugget Finders. A Tale of the Gold Fields of Australia" by H. Alger. Three different Shaw editions are known to have been published, copies of all of which are in the Stanley A. Pachon collection.

One of the editions in Mr. Pachon's possession gives the publisher's address on the title page as 3, Pilgrim Street, London, E. C., whereas the other two editions were issued from 48, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. Reference to the English Catalogue has revealed that Shaw & Company moved from Paternoster Row to Pilgrim Street about 1907 or 1908. That places the edition with the Pilgrim Street imprint as having been issued later than the other two editions.

It was not the practice of John F. Shaw & Company to date its title pages or to provide any copyright information. Fortunately, however, the firm was liberal with bound in advertisements of its publications and so it was possible to establish a probable year of first publication of "The Nugget Finders" by reference to the British Museum registration copies of books published by John F. Shaw & Company in each of the years from 1885 to 1905. That is because publishers are required by British law to deposit a copy of each new book published—but not of reprints—at the British Museum Library for registration: it follows that the B. M. registration date virtually pinpoints the year of first publication.

Perhaps I should say at this point that, for some unexplained reason, the British Museum does not have any record of the publication of "The Nugget Finders" and the work is not mentioned in the English Catalogue either.

Both the Paternoster Row editions of "The Nugget Finders" have an advertisement of thirty-six titles, described as "Uniform with this Volume," on the verso of the title page. The advertisement includes "Obed's Nuggett" by H. Alger, but does not mention "The Nugget Finders." No copy of "Obed's Nuggett" has been located and it too is not mentioned in either the British Museum Catalogue or the English Catalogue. The title indicates that, if ever published, it must have been a reprint of "In a New World," seeing that Obed Stackpole was a character in only that one Alger tale.

It seems improbable that the same tale would have been published by Shaw in the same format under two different titles at the same time and

so other explanations of "Obed's Nugget" must be sought.

One explanation is that "The Nugget Finders" was a title change of an earlier edition, which was published as "Obed's Nugget."

A second explanation is that, after choosing "Obed's Nugget" as the title for its reprint of "In a New World," Shaw decided on a last minute change to "The Nugget Finders" as a more suitable title, but then forgot to amend the proofs of the advertisement.

My research points to the first explanation being less likely than the second. Two of the thirty-six titles, to which reference has been made above, were first published in 1903 (the British Museum registration date was 14 January 1904). Prima facie, therefore, it appears that "The Nugget Finders" was not published before 1903.

An additional piece of circumstantial evidence in support of the second explanation was found in "Twilight Stores" by Catharine Shaw, the British Museum registration copy of which bears the date, 6 January 1905. That volume, which must have been published by Shaw in 1904, has a "Uniform with this Volume" advertisement on the verso of the title page, which lists forty-one titles. Thirty-five of those titles are identical with titles in the similar advertisement found on the versos of the title pages of Mr. Pachon's Paternoster Row editions of "The Nugget Finders" and, as stated in the previous paragraph, of the two volumes listed, which were first published in 1903. Five of the six titles not duplicated, including "Twilight Stores," are new Shaw publications during 1904 (three) or Shaw reprints of books first published earlier by other publishers (two). The sixth title is "The Nugget Finders" by H. Alger and "Obed's Nugget" by H. Alger has disappeared from the list.

The next step was to study more deeply the circumstantial evidence, in case the uniform formats had been in use for a number of years, with new titles being added from time to time. The check from 1885 onwards not only failed to reveal any similar advertisement prior to 1903, but also produced no reference to any titles by H. Alger.

My inferences from this evidence are:

- (1) that in all probability John F. Shaw & Company did not reprint "In a New World" until 1903.
- (2) that it is doubtful if the title, "Obed's Nugget," was ever used by Shaw on a title page.
- (3) that the two editions of "The Nugget Finders" with a 48, Paternoster Row imprint may well have been on sale simultaneously.

On (1), if my inference is correct, the ascription of the first Shaw publication of "The Nugget Finders" to the year 1894 ("Horatio Alger; or, The American Hero Era" by Ralph D. Gardner : The Wayside Press, Mendota, Ill. : [1964] : page 429) was erroneous.

Perhaps it is worth mentioning at this point that "The Nugget Finders" is an abridged and not a complete reprint of "In a New World." First publication of "The Nugget Finders" in 1903 would point to the abridgement having been made from the Henry T. Coates edition of "In a New World."

On (3), format descriptions provided by Mr. Pachon reveal that one edition has the front cover title in black letters, whereas the other edition has the title in gold in an irregular box on the face of the book. Those differences are indicative of a cheap and a more expensive edition, which is compatible with the idea of two editions being on sale at one and the same time.

It is only fair to stress that my inferences are nothing more than

theorizing on circumstantial evidence: consequently they do not pretend to be anything other than logical surmises as to what may have happened.

The one conclusion that seems free from all doubt is that The Garfield Library No. 35 had nothing to do with "The Nugget Finders."

25. The Garfield Library No. 38 is the only book edition of the story of Bob Lovell as it first appeared in "The Golden Argosy"/"The Argosy." However the Munsey serial was later reprinted, with minor revisions, under the title, "The Fireman of the Hercules," in "The Holiday" from 14 October 1890 through 17 January 1891 (Vol. II No. 40 to Vol. III No. 52).

The same story paper then published a sequel, "A Hero of the Throttle," from 24 January through 18 April 1891 (Vol. III Nos. 53 to 65).

In 1892 The Cassell Publishing Company of New York, the newly independent branch office of the famous London publisher, united the two serials as a cloth bound book, bearing the title, "From the Throttle to the President's Chair." The same year Cassell & Company Limited reprinted the book in the United Kingdom, changing the title to "Bob Lovell's Career."

The tale was reprinted, after the failure of The Cassell Publishing Company, which had issued two different editions, by the following publishers:

The Merston Co., New York (3 different editions between 1898 and 1905).

The George M. Hill Company, Chicago (1900).

The Globe Newspaper Co., Boston (1901—as a serial in "The Boston Globe").

John Wanamaker, Philadelphia (ca. 1902).

The Stitt Publishing Company, New York (1905).

The Chatterton-Peck Company, New York (1906).

The A. L. Chatterton Company, New York (1910).

Grosset & Dunlap, New York (2 different editions between 1912 and 1915).

In the United Kingdom "Bob Lovell's Career" sold at 5s/-d (approx. \$1.50 at the rate of exchange in force in those far off days) and, despite a reduction to 3s/6d in 1896 (approx. 87½¢ then), the book went out of print in 1900. Apart from the likelihood that a tale with an American railway background lacked appeal for British youngsters, the asking price was unrealistically high at a time when Ellis' famous Indian stories were being offered by Cassell at 2s/6d (approx. 75¢) each.

26. In No. 364 the main title "Driven from Home; or, Carl Crawford's Experience" was changed to "The Odds against Him" and so the title of the Garfield Library No. 57 was the same as that used for the serialization in "The Argosy," except for the first instalment.
27. In many biographies the birth date of Horatio Alger Jr. is given as 13 January 1834, but I am indebted to Mr. Stanley A. Pachon for pointing out that on page 464 of "A Genealogical History of that Branch of the Alger Family which springs from Thomas Alger of Taunton and Bridgewater, Mass.", which was published in 1876, the date is given as 13 January 1832. The "National Cyclopaedia of American Biography" gives the year of Alger's birth as 1832, but many other biographical sources prefer 1834, apparently on the strength of the author's own information. However, seeing that a sister was born on November 1833, it seems more likely that Horatio's memory was at fault than that his mother gave birth to a girl in November and then, a mere two months later, produced Horatio Junior.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

TED TRUEHEART, OR GOODNESS COUNTS, by Ken McKenna. Article in **NEW YORK DAILY NEWS** for Tuesday, November 16, 1971. A critical evaluation of Alger's works on the occasion of the publication of *Nautilus Books'* publication of two facsimiles of Alger's book. Illustrated with a photo of Alger and a frontispiece from the *Tattered Tom Series*. (Sent in by Maurice Owen.)

ADMIRER REVIVING ALGER BOOKS FOR GUIDANCE OF TODAY'S YOUTH, by Donald F. Mullen. *Chattanooga Sunday Paper* for November 14, 1971. A sympathetic review of Alger books on the occasion of the reprinting of *Phil, the Fiddler and Struggling Upward* by the *Nautilus Press*.

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DynaPubs which advertised a *Street & Smith Index* for sale in the November issue of the *Roundup* has been unable to deliver. Instead of refunding the purchase price of \$1.25 other of their publications are offered.

The membership list, usually published in the January issue is being delayed until February in order to complete the *Garfield Library* article.

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